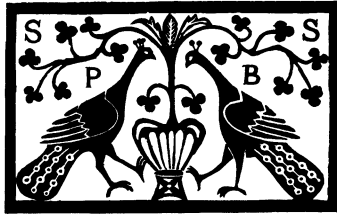

Society News

Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies



Issue 15

November 2008

**XLII Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies
Courtauld Institute of Art, London
20-22 March, 2009**

Wonderful Things: Byzantium through its Art

Reviews of the Royal Academy's exhibition *Byzantium* have invariably stressed the splendour and quality of the objects displayed while complaining about the relative lack of contextual material explaining the history of Byzantium. In this symposium, we want to take the issue of defining Byzantium through its art as a starting point and to explore some of the ways in which this has raised, and still raises, issues and conflicts.

We are interested both in how the post-Byzantine world has seen Byzantium through its art, the RA exhibition being the most recent demonstration of this. We are also concerned with how the Byzantines themselves used art for self-definition and how the medieval world more widely characterised the empire through its objects.

Areas for discussion include:

- how historians of Byzantium have treated art and empire; how they have reacted to Byzantine art in the context of their general views of Byzantium
- the art of Late Antiquity as a bridge between 'classical' and 'Byzantine' art
- how the world of the Middle Ages was affected by Byzantine art (Italy, Georgia, the Crusader states)
- the problems in exhibiting Byzantium to a twenty-first century world with little sense of the culture
- how text and image (both ours and theirs) engage with Byzantine art and ideas about Byzantine identity
- how themes beyond material culture have been presented at exhibitions (eg 'national' identity, Orthodoxy)
- how exhibitions have influenced perceptions of Byzantium and agendas for studying Byzantium

SPEAKERS

Speakers currently include: Robin Cormack, Maria Vassilaki, Helen Evans, David Buckton, John Hanson, Christine Kondoleon, Thelma Thomas, Anastasia Drandaki, Averil Cameron, Paul Magdalino, Michele Bacci, Jaroslav Folda, Rob Nelson, Robert Ousterhout, Leslie Brubaker, Margaret Mullett, Marc Lauxtermann, Anthony Cutler.

SPECIAL EVENTS

In addition to the academic sessions we are delighted to be able to offer a **Private View with reception at the exhibition at the Royal Academy** on the evening of Saturday 21 March (the final evening of the exhibition before it closes).

We are also finalising a **concert to be performed by the internationally acclaimed (and wonderful) Cappella Romana**.

COMMUNICATIONS: Byzantine Object Lessons

We invite communications (maximum 13 minutes) to be delivered during the symposium. As usual we will read all proposals, but especially invite communications on particular objects in the exhibition, which will be grouped as 'Byzantine Object Lessons'. Please send offers of communications (title and 150 word abstract) to Prof Liz James, Department of Art History, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9QN, E.James@sussex.ac.uk by 15 January 2009.

There will be limited space for communications, but we are offering free registration to the symposium to all those that are accepted in the 'Byzantine Object Lessons' section.

REGISTRATION

We are offering early registration for the symposium at the following rates:

Full: £70

Members of the SPBS: £60

Students/concessions: £30

Please send a cheque made payable to 'Courtauld Institute of Art' to:

Research Forum Events Co-ordinator
Courtauld Institute of Art Research Forum
Somerset House, Strand
London WC2R 0RN

clearly stating that you wish to book for the 'Wonderful Things conference'. For credit card bookings call 020 7848 2785/2909. For further information, send an e-mail to

ResearchForumEvents@courtauld.ac.uk

(after 19 February 2009 rates will rise to £85, £75 and £35 respectively).

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation and lunch will not be included because it really is cheaper to find your own. However, advice on accommodation will also be posted on the website and circulated with the Programme mailing.

At the moment Travelodge are offering great deals on rooms in London over the weekend of 20-22 March 2009 (starting from £19 per night). So it really is worth booking the symposium and hotel NOW.

Antony Eastmond and Liz James
Symposiarchs

SPBS Grants

The SPBS offers a number of grants from the 2006 Fund to subsidise the cost of attending the Spring Symposium. They are available to those registering for the whole conference and are designed to enable those who would otherwise be unable to afford the cost of the symposium to attend. Awards will be made of a minimum of £50. Priority will be given to students at UK universities and to the unwaged in the UK. Byzantinists based outside the UK who wish to attend the symposium are encouraged to apply to their own national committee of the AIEB for financial support if needed. See the SPBS website:

http://www.byzantium.ac.uk/frameset_spbsgrants.htm

**BYZANTIUM COMES TO BRITAIN!
(And not just London!!)**

To celebrate the Royal Academy Exhibition *Byzantium 330-1453* (25th October, 2008-22nd March, 2009), the SPBS Development Committee has joined forces with a number of institutions to present a series of lectures and day events outside London to complement those organised in the capital. These will allow members in the regions to participate in what is a very 'big year' for Byzantine Studies.

We are extremely fortunate that Rowena Loverance, author of the recent very well-received book *Christian Art* (British Museum Press, 2007) and the British Museum guide *Byzantium* (2004) and also SPBS Executive Member, has agreed to lecture on the Society's behalf. Her title is *From Edinburgh 1958-London 2008: Byzantine art for our times?* Scottish members will be able to hear her in St Andrew's and Glasgow by contacting the relevant Hellenic Societies (see below). London-based members will be most welcome to meet her at King's College London in February, 2009.

We are also delighted to announce that the SPBS is linking with the Open University and the Warburg Institute to present a Study Day on *Cross-Cultural Interactions between the Mediterranean and Western Europe during the Late Byzantine (Palaiologan) Period* in Cambridge. The Society is also jointly promoting a Day Conference at the University of York on *Byzantine Ravenna: New Perspectives*.

In most cases, admission fees to these events for SPBS members will be FREE or REDUCED, so make sure you are fully paid up!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

2nd December, 2008: Scottish Hellenic Society, St Andrew's,
<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/greeks/>
Rowena Loverance: *From Edinburgh 1958-London 2008: Byzantine art for our times?* (6.30)
Contact: Katerina Oikonomopoulou, School of Classics, University of St Andrew's, KY16 9AL
ao40@st-andrews.ac.uk

3rd December, 2008: Scottish Hellenic Society, Glasgow and History of Art Dept. University of Glasgow,
<http://www.scottishhellenic.org>
Rowena Loverance: *From Edinburgh 1958-London 2008: Byzantine art for our times?* (7.00)
Contact: Richard Jones, Dept. of Archaeology, Gregory Building, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, G12 8QQ
r.jones@archaeology.gla.ac.uk

17th February, 2009: British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara
Rowena Loverance: *From Edinburgh 1958-London 2008: Byzantine art for our times?* (5.30). Meeting to be held at King's College, London.
Contact: Siobhan McKeown: biaa@britac.ac.uk

21st February, 2009: Department of Art History, Open University, Warburg Institute and SPBS *Cross-Cultural Interactions between the Mediterranean and Western Europe during the Late Byzantine (Palaiologan) Period* (10.30-5.00) (OU East of England Centre, Hills Road, Cambridge).
<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/arthistory/events.htm> for details and registration (FREE).

28th February, 2009: Department of History of Art, University of York and SPBS *Byzantine Ravenna; New Perspectives* (9.15-5.00) (King's Manor, University of York).
<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/histart/byzantine-ravenna.html> for details and registration (£5 for SPBS members which includes refreshments and sandwich lunch).
Contacts: Rosemary Morris (rm22@york.ac.uk) or Becky Sanchez (rjs136@york.ac.uk)



Society Matters

Notice

1. There will be an **Extraordinary General Meeting** of the Society in the course of the annual Symposium at 1.30p.m., on Sunday 22nd March 2009 in the Courtauld Institute of Art, Strand, London, WC2R 0RN at which the following resolutions will be proposed.

1. That the Constitution of the Society be amended by inserting the following new sub-clause VI.2 after sub-clause VI.1 and by re-wording the existing sub-clauses VI .2-5 accordingly:-

2(i) Each holder of the offices of President, Chairman and Treasurer shall become a Vice-President of the Society for a term of five years from the date of ceasing to hold such offices respectively.

(ii) Vice-Presidents of the Society shall be entitled to receive notice of and to attend meetings of the Executive Committee and shall be entitled to speak but not to vote at such meetings.

2. In the case of the last holder of the offices of President, Chairman or Treasurer who has vacated office before the date of this resolution, the term of five years referred to in clause VI.2(i) shall be calculated from the date of this meeting.

Resolution 2 will only be proposed if resolution 1 is carried.

3. That the Constitution of the Society be further amended by deleting in sub-clause V.2(a) the words “the Chairman of the Publications Sub-committee and of the Development Sub-committee (if not already members)” and substituting “the Chairman of each of the Sub-committees appointed under clause V.3(b) (if otherwise eligible and not already a member)”.

2. The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on the same day and place as soon as the Extraordinary General Meeting has been concluded.

3. Members who are not participants in the Symposium are entitled to attend these meetings.

Chair of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies

Following the appointment of Prof Margaret Mullett as Director of Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks, the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies is looking for a NEW CHAIR.

This is your opportunity to lead the promotion of Byzantine Studies in the UK. We would welcome nominations from across the full range of the membership of the society (academic seniority is not a precondition!). Enthusiasm and a desire to promote Byzantine studies are much more important.

If you wish to stand as Chair of the Society, please write to the Secretary (Antony Eastmond, Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, Strand, London, WC2R 0RN; email: antony.eastmond@courtauld.ac.uk), with the names of your proposer and seconder. Nominations close on 31 December 2008.

Please also include a manifesto or personal statement so that all may read your ideas for the future of the Society. All manifestoes and personal statements will be posted on the Society's website so that members can read ideas in advance of the election.

The new Chair will be elected at the Society's Annual General Meeting at 1.30pm on Sunday 22 March 2009 at the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London [Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN]

From the Treasurer...

Please could members remember that annual subscription to the Society is due by 31st January 2009 (£20 / \$40 / 40 euros / or £10 / \$20 / 20 euros for students).

Please note that those members who are in arrears will not receive a copy of the *Bulletin of British Byzantine Studies* 35 (2009) or be eligible for a discount at the 2009 Symposium.